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University of Massachusetts

1975-76 Annual Report

Commonwealth
of Massachusetts

Board of Education



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1975-76 Annual Report

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Education

The Massachusetts Department of Education insures equal employment/educational opportunities/affirmative action, regardless of race, color, creed, national origin or sex, in compliance with Title IX.



BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S NOTE

On behalf of my colleagues on the Board of Education, I am pleased to submit the Fiscal Year 1976 report of the Board's and Department of Education's activities.

The format for the Board's 139th annual report to the citizens of Massachusetts reflects our effort to provide the public with an account of the programs and activities conducted by the Board through the Department of Education. Priorities were determined on the basis of needs and resources. The general and traditional responsibilities of the Board

and Department continue. However, in areas where discretion is available or through reorganization of existing operations, the Board is allowed to alter the focus of resources through priorities that reflect those decisions. My colleagues and I welcome your comments on this report.

This document is a summary of a much larger report which contains the narrative descriptions of each of the Department's divisions and bureaus. Also included in the larger report is a statistical analysis of pupil and fiscal data in the public school districts of the Commonwealth. Persons wishing to review the full report should contact the Department's Bureau of Educational Information Services, 182 Tremont Street, Boston.

The composition of the Board changed during fiscal year 1975-76. Upon completion of his second term, John S. Sullivan of North Andover also ended his two-year chairmanship of the Board. During his more than ten years of distinguished service, he supported statewide regionalization of the Department, racial balance in Boston and Springfield and equal opportunity for all students.

Members of the Board were deeply saddened by the death of Ramona L. Corriveau of Springfield, a dedicated Board member for five years, who took special interest in the handicapped, minority isolation and occupational education.

New members who are contributing to the Board include Mary Barros, New Bedford; James L. Green, Brockton; Anne H. McHugh, Holyoke; and Joseph C. Mello Jr., Lowell. The Board also welcomed a Wayland High School senior, Julie Donahue, as a member. She replaced Charles Baker of Auburn as chairperson of the State Student Advisory Council.

I wish to express the deepest gratitude to these fine persons and also to Commissioner Gregory R. Anrig and members of the Department of Education for their determination to achieve educational goals for Massachusetts students during the past year.

Mary Ann Hardenbergh
Chairperson, Board of Education

COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE

This document marks the fourth year that I have reported on implementation of the Massachusetts Board of Education's priorities. These priorities form the foundation upon which the staff of the Department constructs an annual appropriations request to the Governor. The Commissioner then designs an operational plan for the implementation of these priorities. The purpose of this process is to move state education forward so that the ten Educational Goals for Massachusetts, adopted by the Board in 1971, become reality for all children in the Commonwealth.

The major challenge and the major accomplishment this year has been the establishment of a Board-directed policy framework for occupational education in Massachusetts. More students are beginning to be served by occupational education in new ways, without harm to existing high quality occupational education programs. Steps through a variety of laws and funding sources are being taken by the Department to broaden access to occupational education for all students but particularly for minorities, the handicapped and female students. A second policy paper, the Arts in Education, was also adopted by the Board. Despite limited resources at both the state and local levels, it is hoped that through this policy greater emphasis will be placed on this important sector.

Chapter 766 was enacted into law because parents of special needs children organized and convinced the legislature that their children were not being satisfactorily educated. As we end the second year of implementing Chapter 766, the facts indicate the parents were right. Substantially more children have been identified as having special needs and are now being served by educational programs that didn't exist two years ago. The evidence also indicates that parents have a growing confidence that special needs children now will be adequately educated by school districts.

While the Commonwealth, Board and Depart-

ment have been criticized since Chapter 766 was enacted into law, I believe considerable pride can be taken in the fact that the law's objectives are being achieved despite enormous odds and obstacles.

A fourth area emphasized in FY 76 was implementation of Chapter 622, the equal educational opportunity law. Efforts centered around information, training and assistance. If the initial success of Chapter 622 can be judged by heightened awareness and scrutiny of questionable practices which have come to be taken for granted by school districts, the first year implementation of Chapter 622 regulations has been successful. The test of its success in the future will be best revealed in changing enrollment patterns in specialized and extracurricular offerings of the public schools and the elimination of often subtle but discriminatory references in curricula and texts.

School finance reform, another subject of continuing concern, came under close examination by the Board. Hope for needed change in this key area can be seen by the legislature's reaction to reduction in Chapter 70, the general state aid to education. The efforts of the Board and other interest groups made in FY 76 will continue through public discussion.

The year 1976 saw progress in educational assessment, Department decentralization and affirmative action, to mention a few additional areas. The progress reflected in this report represents accomplishments of the Board, my colleagues in the Department and the support received from school officials, the public and the Great and General Court for which I am deeply grateful.

Gregory R. Anrig
Commissioner of Education

During this bicentennial year, the Massachusetts Board of Education reaffirmed some of the original egalitarian principles upon which our country was founded. The Board expanded educational opportunities and developed new policies in the fields of special education, occupational education, the arts and school finance. Upgrading the education of minorities, females and general students was also stressed.





IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Expanded Occupational Education Services

Policy on Occupational Education

On March 23, 1976, the Board of Education adopted unanimously an occupational education policy. The policy provides definition and direction for occupational education in the Commonwealth. This action culminated a year and a half of study by the Board which included data analysis, contracted reports, Board seminars, colloquia and six regional public hearings in the fall of 1975.

Goals for occupational education established.

Preliminary work was started on several policy issues including career guidance, adult education and improvement of management information. The Division of Occupational Education completed the regionalization of its program personnel and services with a total of 54 staff now in the six regional education centers compared to six staff in FY 75.

To coordinate policy implementation, the Board approved establishment of a new Bureau of Career Education and Exemplary Programs in the Division. Attention was directed to assure that the \$7 million in federal funds awarded in occupational education grants reflected the Board's policy.

New Programs for Students Previously Unserved by Occupational Education

Two million dollars in federal Vocational Education Act and Title IV, Elementary and Secondary Education Act funds were awarded this year to 26 school districts. The funds were designated to initiate programs in FY 77 for a total of approximately 6,000 students previously unserved by occupational education. Of this amount, \$1,068,000 was awarded to five target urban areas: Boston, Lowell/Lawrence, Worcester, Springfield and New Bedford/Fall River.

Funds used to stimulate occupational programs for students previously unserved.

Under leadership of the Division of Occupational Education, technical assistance and proposal reviews for all these actions were provided regionally on an inter-divisional basis. A contracted evaluation of the 41 operational projects was conducted in FY 76 and reported to the Board in June.

Unified Plan for Occupational Education in Boston

A Unified Plan for Occupational Education in Boston was prepared, approved by the Board and Boston School Committee, and ordered to be implemented by the Federal District Court on September 8, 1975.

Boston occupational education plan prepared.

Two accomplishments were made in FY 76 regarding the Unified Plan. First, agreement was reached by the state, city and school committee on a site and educational specifications for an Occupational Resource Center. Upon construction, the ORC will provide occupational education facilities for 3,600 students in Boston and will serve as a keystone for the Unified Plan. Second, upon motion of the Board, the Federal District Court ordered the appointment of an associate superintendent for occupational education in Boston and nine district occupational education coordinators. The new associate superintendent position offers hope for leadership and accountability within the Boston public schools.



Second Year Implementation of Chapter 766

Delivery of Special Education Services

Although there are individual incidents of special needs children not receiving education services required by Chapter 766, the statewide goal of identifying and evaluating all special needs children in FY 76 was largely achieved. Chapter 766 of the General Laws guarantees that all children, regardless of

handicap, are entitled to an equal educational opportunity in the public schools of Massachusetts.

All special needs children identified and evaluated.

Preliminary figures indicated that a total of 131,000 children received special education services in Massachusetts in FY 76 compared to 119,000 last year and 80,000 the year before Chapter 766 went into effect. This year's total represented approximately 12 percent of the school enrollment and was equal to the estimated national incidence rate for special needs children.



By June 30, all 2,600 children in state institutions either had their core evaluations completed or were under contract for a core evaluation. Over 1,000 children in state institutions received total or partial educational programs in accordance with recommendations emanating from the core evaluation. All children in state hospitals and pediatric nursing homes had their core evaluations completed either by contract from the Division of Special Education or by their school district of residence.

Massachusetts was one of the first states in the country to conduct "Child Search," a concerted effort required by the new federal special education law to identify handicapped children who were not receiving any educational services. Between March 15, 1976, and April 15, 1976, extensive media coverage led to 1,000 telephone calls to the toll-free Child Search number. A total of 87 children were found who were not receiving any education.

Occupational education programs for special needs children instituted.

Occupational education programs for special needs children were established in six collaboratives serving 98 school districts in FY 76. Compared to 1,345 special needs children in special or regular occupational education programs last year, a total of 3,608 such children were placed in occupational education programs in FY 76. In addition, 177 children from state institutions for the first time participated in occupational education programs in regional vocational-technical high schools or in educational collaboratives near the institutions.

Two training conferences were conducted in conjunction with Worcester State College and Fitchburg State college on occupational education for students with special needs. To encourage the growth of occupational education for these children, two technical assistance services — Project PROD and Project OPTION — were funded by the Divisions of Special and Occupational Education. In addition, a resource guide entitled "Occupational

Preparation for the Handicapped" was produced and distributed by Project CEDIS, a career education information project funded by the Division of Occupational Education.

Core evaluations completed for children in out-of-state schools.

By July 30, core evaluations were completed for all "grandfathered" children in out-of-state schools. The number of out-of-state placements before Chapter 766 went into effect was 783. This past June the number was 331 due to attrition and to transfer to in-state programs (especially to new collaborative programs for the deaf). On the basis of the completed core evaluations, in-state programs satisfactory to the parents of these children will be sought in FY 77 to decrease this number even further, with resulting savings for the Commonwealth.

Management Improvement of the Administration of Chapter 766

A program audit and assistance system was designed and field tested in 22 school districts in FY 76. Special education programs enrolling a total of 13,451 in all regions of the state were evaluated, including District I in Boston and the City of Springfield. Based on this experience, the instruments used were substantially revised and a contractor employed to complete an evaluation of the program audit and assistance system in time for full implementation beginning in the next fiscal year.

Program audit and assistance system developed.

Followup procedures to the audits also were being developed. For instance, training programs and federal special education grants were keyed to findings of the audit teams. In addition, more than 100 school district personnel and 25 parents participated on this past year's 22 audit teams. Ninety-five Department personnel also participated on audit teams which can assist districts in modifying their programs where appropriate. Massachusetts will be

the first state in the nation to develop and implement a special education evaluation system which meets the requirements not only of Chapter 766, but of the new federal special education law as well.

Appeals process simplified.

As a result of an inefficient appeals process in the first year of 766, the Bureau of Special Education Appeals was completely revamped in the fall and due process policies were designed in collaboration with the Department's Legal Office. Two hundred and fifteen appeals were heard in FY 75. In FY 76 this number was increased to 450 appeals with an average of 60 new appeals per month.

Since January, the Bureau has been meeting all dates required by the law and regulations. Eight staff members now conduct pre-hearing conferences at which 65 percent of the new cases are being settled through negotiations. Five staff members serve as hearings officers.

Sixty-two percent of the decisions rendered in FY 76 were in favor of the school district. There was a significant decrease (from 79 to 59 percent) in appeals in which the parent sought private school placement and a significant increase (from 13 to 41 percent) in cases where agreement was reached on public placements. These signs seemed to indicate an improvement in the quality of educational plans within the school district setting and increased confidence on the part of parents in the capacity of school districts to provide satisfactory special needs programs.

Entitlements and eligibilities of children in out-of-state private schools and in state institutions completed.

As a result of coordinated efforts with human services agencies in conducting the core evaluations of children in state institutions, the Commonwealth will be reimbursed a total of \$6 million of Title XIX funds for services delivered to the 2,600 children under Board of Education jurisdiction. In addition,

267 children in private school placements who appear to be eligible for "third party" coverage (Champus program for military personnel, private health insurance and Medicaid) were identified. To reduce state costs, the Board attempted to gain parental assistance in filing claims. Present procedure, however, provides little leverage and no incentive for such cooperation, since the state must assume all costs for these grandfathered children.

Interagency coordination between Department and human services agencies promoted.

To improve services at the regional level, an *ad hoc* interagency committee was formed under joint chairmanship of the Commissioner of Education and the Director of the Office for Children. Among the accomplishments of this group were the following:

- drafting of Chapter 766 regulations revisions adopted in FY 76
- clarification of the roles and responsibilities of regional review boards and interagency teams in each region
- establishment of policy on cost-sharing between school districts and human services agencies for children where there is joint responsibility
- preparation and publication of a directory of human services agencies and contractors which serve children in each region, including an explanation of how school districts can apply for assistance
- drafting of joint regulations for licensing of private schools and day care programs which will be adopted by all agencies and administered for all by Office for Children
- request for an Attorney General's opinion clarifying that the grandfathering provision of Chapter 766 applies to all state agencies, not just to the Department of Education

- resolution of five difficult placement cases which could not be settled at the regional level
- development of a phase-in plan for transition of children in community clinical nursery schools to school districts by September, 1977

Planning New Special Education Services

An early childhood education plan was prepared by a task force and presented to the Board in December. The Board redirected it to focus on existing requirements of Chapter 766 for children ages 3-5. However, the Board also encouraged recommendations for the coordination of state services to strengthen the family's capacity to help a child with special needs. Massachusetts will receive a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Office of Education for staff to assist school districts with such early childhood special-needs programs.

Early childhood plan, regional services for deaf and secondary education programs for special needs children designed.

A coordinator for statewide services for the deaf was employed. Development of five regional service plans will be completed by mid FY 77.

A survey of effective secondary programs for special needs students was conducted in FY 76. Twelve models were presented to a conference of school district representatives. Six demonstration grants will be awarded to begin replication of these models of secondary special needs programs in FY 77.

Implementation of Chapter 622

Training Programs for Department and School Personnel

A major Department effort was promoting public awareness of Chapter 622 and the federal Title IX regulations. Chapter 622 was implemented to provide minority groups and females with an equal educational opportunity in public schools of the Commonwealth. Training workshops were con-

ducted at the Department's six regional centers in FY 76. Twenty-seven hundred personnel from 230 school districts participated. Workshops were held for school administrators, Title IX/622 coordinators, in-service training teams from school districts, curriculum evaluation teams, physical education teachers, elementary school teachers, vocational educators, guidance directors and other specialists.

Workshops conducted for school personnel in the six educational regions.

In addition, Department personnel participated in 68 school district Chapter 622 training programs involving 4,300 school personnel and made 55 presentations to community and professional organizations. Television and radio public service announcements on Chapter 622 were produced. Radio and television appearances by members of the Board, the Commissioner and staff were also made in order to promote the program.

To provide technical assistance for school districts, Chapter 622 staff were assigned to regional centers in FY 76 and 125 regional center staff, representing all divisions, received training in 622 requirements. Over 100 visits were made by Department staff to individual school districts.

Guides produced in key areas affected by Chapter 622.

To assist school officials on Chapter 622 implementation, resource centers were established at the six regional education offices. The following publications were completed in FY 76:

- *Chapter 622: Questions and Answers*
- *Chapter 622 Regulations*
- *A Guide for the Evaluation of Instructional Materials Under Chapter 622*
- *Resource List of Consultants Working on Issues of Equal Educational Opportunity*

- *Scholarship and Financial Awards: Guidelines for the Implementation of Chapter 622 and Title IX Regulations*
- *Title IX and Chapter 622: Compliance Guidelines for Public Schools*
- *El Capitulo 622 y Usted*
- *Equal Opportunity in Physical Education and Athletics*
- "Law and Physical Education: Three Approaches to Chapter 622" (a videotape prepared by the Department's educational television bureau on creative approaches to co-educational physical education at the middle school level)

Model Program Awards for 622 Implementation

To encourage greater diversity in the students seeking admissions to regional vocational-technical high schools, a model grant was awarded to the Shawshen Valley Regional Vocational-Technical High School. The purpose of the grant was to demonstrate techniques to reduce the number of stereotyping practices influencing career expectations at the middle school level. Also awarded was \$500,000 in Title IV ESEA grants to 20 school districts for the creative implementation of Chapter 622.

Demonstration programs to institute Chapter 622 developed.

Procedures Used to Enforce the Law

A total of 21 official complaints were submitted to the Department in FY 76 under Chapter 622 provisions. Ten complaints were resolved. Ten are still being negotiated. One (New Bedford), after extensive investigation, is the subject of a Board of Education order for adjudicatory hearings in cooperation with the Office of the Attorney General.

622 regulations actively enforced.

In order to address 622 grievances, standardized procedures were established within the Depart-

ment. Data were compiled on minority and male/female enrollments in vocational education programs. In addition, school districts were directed to file by July 1, 1976, specific plans for resolving inequities evident in the individual school enrollment data which were provided them by the Department. So that the Department could effectively monitor the impact of Chapter 622 regulations, data also were collected on participation in athletics and selected course enrollments.

Finally, in response to objections that the Chapter 622 regulations adopted by the Board in June, 1975, exceeded the law and legislative intent, the Attorney General was asked by the Commissioner to review the regulations for their conformity to law. His opinion affirmed that the regulations in question appropriately translated Chapter 622 and other legal requirements for school districts.

School Desegregation in Boston and Springfield

Legal Proceedings in the Federal District Court

State and federal laws regarding racial segregation and Board guidelines enforced.

Phase II of the desegregation order of Federal District Judge W. Arthur Garrity, Jr. was implemented in Boston in FY 76. Before school opened the Commissioner and Department staff were active in public information efforts, as they were in monitoring all aspects of Phase II. Represented in all court proceedings, the Board took positions on the following:

- appeal of the Phase II order to the Circuit Court of Appeals and to the United States Supreme Court
- receivership of the Boston School Committee
- conditions at South Boston High School and defense of the receivership order in the Court of Appeals



- development of a new code of discipline
- budget reductions and school closings
- the Unified Plan for Occupational Education
- the attempt to force state takeover of the school department deficit
- the Phase IIB order for 1976-77
- a variety of administrative issues ranging from staffing bilingual and special education programs to transportation and Chapter 636 funding procedures

Regulation of Attendance and Discipline Laws

Weekly attendance reports were received from the Boston Superintendent of Schools. As a result of state monitoring, school department enforcement of attendance laws was strengthened. Procedures for the approval of private schools in Boston were monitored closely with the effect that the upsurge of so-called "white academics" did not materialize as threatened.

Focusing Funds on Needs of Both Districts

Extra state and federal funds from several appropriations were directed to both cities with the assistance of urban service teams in the Springfield and Greater Boston regional centers representing all divisions of the Department. For educational improvements supportive of both desegregation plans, \$6.6 million in Chapter 636 funds were granted to Boston and \$1.3 million to Springfield. These funds resulted in direct services affecting 71,393 students in both communities in such areas as reading, language arts, mathematics, career education, special education, bilingual education, art, music, humanities and physical education.

Promotion of Metropolitan Education Programs

A total of \$6.8 million was directed to voluntary metropolitan education programs in FY 76. Of that amount, \$5.9 million was for 3,150 METCO children who attended school daily in 43 suburban school

districts. The remainder provided a variety of urban-suburban cultural and magnet educational programs which in FY 76 provided direct services to 8,520 students. Also in accordance with Board guidelines for desegregation plans, Chapter 636 funds were provided to New Bedford, Lawrence, Fall River and Worcester for new initiatives to reduce the isolation of minority students.

DEVELOPMENT OF NEW POLICIES

Implementation of Chapter 847

Objectives for teacher certification law, Chapter 847, reflected changes in educational climate.

The advisory commission for certification of school personnel developed five competency criteria for permanent certification. The commission also developed a classification system based on level, subject, category and skill area for such certification. An evaluation handbook was prepared for use in the permanent certification process and an interim report on provisional certification was completed which provides for provisional certification. This proposal states that in order to receive provisional certification, the candidate must possess a B.A. or B.S. degree from an accredited school, college or university and have completed course work in the appropriate field and student teaching (as defined by standards administered by regional teacher councils).

Alternative routes to certification are still under study. To define the competencies required for each area of certification, eight professional advisory groups comprised of 82 members have been meeting since fall, 1975. A comprehensive written and

oral presentation by the commission was made to the Board in April.

Despite extensive efforts, the FY 77 Department of Education budget before the legislature again contains no provision for funding the teacher certification law or the Division of Educational Personnel as called for by the statute.

The Board asked the commission to advise it on possible phasing options for the law, taking into consideration present fiscal constraints and the over-supply of teachers. The Board will decide in the fall how to proceed with Chapter 847 and whether modifications to the legislation should be proposed.

Equalizing School Finance and Promoting Cost Effectiveness

Efforts Made by Educational and Municipal Associations to Advance School Finance Reform

Assistance was provided the legislature's Commission on Unequal Educational Opportunity in the design of a bill encompassing the Board's objectives for school finance reform. Although this bill was reviewed and endorsed by the Board and amended to the Senate version of the FY 76 state budget, it was subsequently dropped by the legislature. It was resubmitted for the current legislative session as part of a comprehensive local aid bill filed by the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation and the League of Cities and Towns. On invitation of the Governor, the Commissioner joined the Governor's Local Aid Task Force and provided Department assistance to that group chaired by the Community Affairs Secretary.

School finance reform efforts continued.

Promotion of Cost Effectiveness in School Transportation and Construction

The Board was presented with recommendations to revise the school transportation formula and ap-

proved the changes for purposes of legislative submission. In cooperation with the Department and the Executive Office of Educational Affairs, the Joint Education Committee recommended a school building assistance bill (H-4812). The bill incorporated the Board objectives to improve the cost efficiency of school construction while maintaining state aid for interest as well as construction costs.

Increase of Federal and State Funds to Urban Districts

To assist with the concentration of state and federal funds for urban school districts, three urban service teams were organized in the Greater Boston, Northeast and Springfield regional education centers. One million dollars of occupational competency funds went to five target urban areas, and an additional \$1.9 million was designated for urban vocational education programs.

Nine million dollars in Chapter 636 funds were directed to seven cities plus additional amounts of federal special education and Title IV ESEA funds. The distribution of state and federal discretionary funds in FY 76 reflected the Board's desire to increase aid to urban school districts in the Commonwealth.

School District Organization

An examination of school district organization options was chosen rather than the issuing of regulations.

School districts were involved in the process of examining organizational options in FY 76 through a series of regional meetings. With the assistance of school district reorganization teams in each regional education center, meetings were conducted with superintendents and school committee members from 200 school districts that could be affected by reorganization. District-by-district options (129) were reviewed with an explanation of the improved regional school aid incentives contained in Chapter 492.

In June the Board authorized Department staff to obtain from school districts which did not have one superintendent and one school committee governing grades kindergarten to twelve a series of districting options. The options will be based on a local study over the next two years, in the order of preference of the school district. From this will evolve a master plan for school district organization in the Commonwealth with full opportunity for local involvement.

Two districts — Groton/Dunstable and Dennis/Yarmouth — reorganized in FY 76 into K-12 districts serving a total of 6,745 students. Sixteen educational collaboratives were formed and received state approval in FY 76. These 16 collaboratives will provide special education, occupational education or instructional media services to schools in 144 towns.

Second Year Implementation of the Educational Assessment Program

Statewide Educational Assessment Program

Phase II of the Massachusetts assessment program was fully completed and the reports publicly announced in May. Professional associations of teachers of English, social studies and foreign languages were involved in the assessment design in the areas of writing, citizenship, social studies and foreign languages, as were the METCO Council and the Bilingual Advisory Council in the two special assessments. A pilot study on school climate was also completed in FY 76.

Assessment program implemented to enable schools to evaluate their curriculum needs.



Extension of Statewide Assessment on Local Level

Local assessment teams were instituted to assist local school districts in interpreting statewide results and in developing local assessment programs using statewide instruments. Four school systems (Peabody, Reading, New Bedford and Auburn) are planning local assessment programs.

Implementation of Recommendations of the Arts Planning Group

Arts priority instituted in educational and cultural institutions.

All but three of the Arts in Education Task Force's 15 recommendations were implemented in FY 76. The major recommendations were adopted by the Board in its "Policy on the Arts in Education." Two workshops on the arts for special needs children were conducted with 400 participants. For followup projects to these workshops, \$30,000 of federal special education funds were awarded. Other sources of funds for arts projects included:

- \$400,000 from Chapter 636 for cultural institutions in Boston
- \$29,000 from the Division of Occupational Education for a study of job opportunities in the arts for Massachusetts youth and for training 125 teachers in this curriculum area
- \$240,000 from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act for innovative programs in the arts

In-service education programs in the arts were developed cooperatively with Lesley College, Wheelock College and the University of Massachusetts/Amherst.

Initial Exploration of Minimum Standards for High School Graduation

Guidelines for high school graduation studied.

A planning group of educators, students, parents, school committee members, employers and Department staff was organized to develop recommended guidelines for high school graduation. Several areas for functional competency were identified: communication, computation, social responsibility, career, environmental and cultural skills. Competencies for the area of communication were developed in detail to enable preliminary review by the Board in the fall of 1976.

Promotion of University/Business Collaboration

Higher educational institutions and businesses shared expertise with schools.

Over two and one-half million dollars from Chapter 636 funds were directed to support the 22 university/school pairings in Boston affecting a total of 40,759 students. Initiative was taken to remove bureaucratic roadblocks to funding university pairings within the School Department and City Hall with some improvement. An evaluation report on the university pairings was prepared for possible replication in other urban areas.

INCREASING MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCY

Support of Affirmative Action Program

Recruitment and promotion of minority personnel supported by Department.

Progress was made in the employment of personnel, selection of "03" contractors and awarding of grants. Twenty percent of the Department's personnel appointments in FY 76 were minority persons at all grade levels; 35 percent of professional level appointments were minority persons. Sources of affirmative action candidates were expanded, including Department minority employees. To remove barriers not essential for job performances, job specifications and classifications were in the process of being reviewed and revised. Forty-eight percent of professional new employees in the Department were female, as were 40 percent of the promotions.

In the case of "03" contracts, vendor lists were expanded to include more minority firms. Contractors were required to provide desegregated staffs for Department projects.

In addition, the Attorney General ruled that the Department could apply affirmative action standards to school building assistance grants. Finally, the Firefighting Academy launched a special effort

to prepare minority candidates for the Firefighters Civil Service Exam. Two thousand minority candidates received special training; five of the courses offered were in Spanish.

Organization of Management Information Resources

Fiscal and informational systems streamlined.

The computer unit of the Department was reorganized with job controls and work standards in-



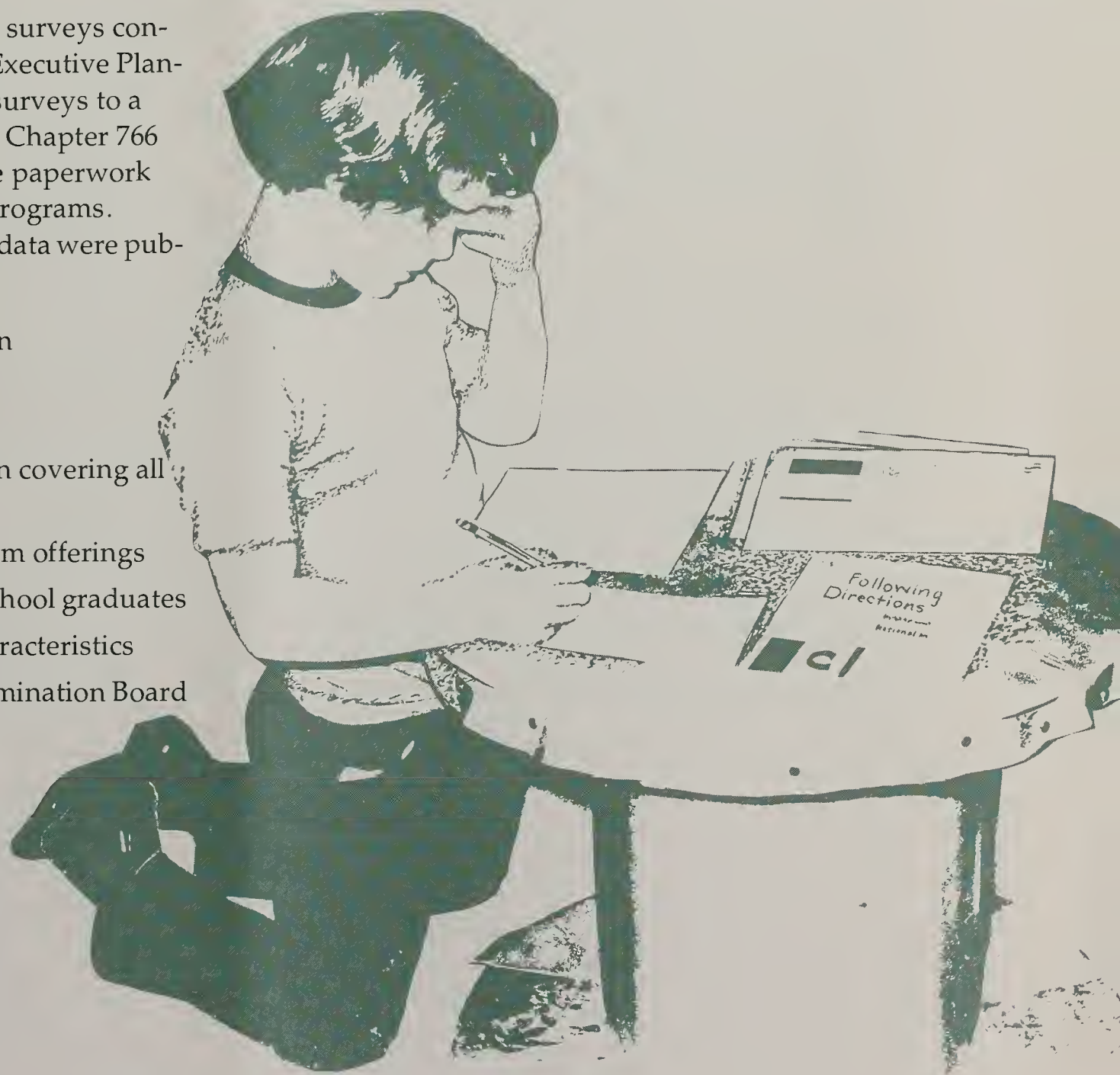
troduced. Concurrent use of the State College computer was in the process of being tested for possible consolidation with the Department computer in FY 77.

All fiscal operations of the Department were centralized under an Executive Director of Fiscal Affairs. The annual school report on which state aid is computed was simplified and shortened. School personnel who will complete this report were trained.

All state and federal school district surveys continued to be policed by the Office of Executive Planning in order to keep the number of surveys to a minimum. Technical amendments to Chapter 766 regulations substantially reduced the paperwork required for local special education programs.

Reports on the following statistical data were published:

- an analysis of test score decline in Massachusetts
- a report on school vandalism
- an updated enrollment projection covering all school districts up to 1980
- a report on high school curriculum offerings
- a report on distribution of high school graduates
- a report on professional staff characteristics
- a report on College Entrance Examination Board scores



- a brochure listing the sources and location of all management information data available in the Department to facilitate their use

Development and Standardization of Due Process Procedures

Procedures were developed and applied in the following kinds of hearings: Chapter 766 appeals, Department personnel terminations, proprietary school license revocation or denials, federal grant denial appeals, and non-compliance hearings involving school committees. Under the guidance of the Department's Legal Office, various procedures were used for the different types of hearings, with personnel trained to monitor each of the above categories.

Regionalization of Department Services to School Districts

Phase II Regionalization Plan Implementation

Personnel assigned to the six regional education centers increased from 186 individuals in FY 75 to 247 in FY 76. Practically all program operations of the Department are now located in each region. Communications were improved through a series of trained "linkers." Regional center budgets were established. The same number of staff performed all previous responsibilities of the Department plus new ones for which there were no additional staffing.

Regional Education Councils In Operation

Regional councils advised the Board this past year on matters including budget priorities, regulation changes and the policy on occupational education. An annual report from each regional education center was reviewed by the councils and submitted to the Board this past summer. For the first time, all the councils met at an annual meeting to discuss common issues.

Postscript

In addition to the above priority objectives, the Board completed other important tasks including:

- amendment of census, student records and special education regulations
- phasing-out of the Experimental School System
- evaluation of the Citizen Resource Center and of MAX-ED programs
- expansion of the school breakfast policy
- approval of the Cape Verdean language under the Transitional Bilingual Education Act
- expanded participation of Board members on regional education councils and first annual joint meeting of the councils
- improved liaison with the Massachusetts congressional delegation on federal legislation
- appointment of the Deputy Commissioner for Coordination
- cooperation with the state Labor Relations Commission regarding teacher strikes in Lynn, Boston and New Bedford
- favorable review of Department operations by the Governor's Management Task Force
- direct participation on the State Office for Employee Relations management bargaining team under the new public employees' collective bargaining law
- favorable recommendations by the Joint Education Committee of the legislature on Board bills for private school regulation and educational assessment

The Board continued to conduct several regular meetings in each of the educational regions, in an effort to meet with area school officials and regional education council members.



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